(b) if so, the details of this funding, the amount of funds, the targeted colleges and the objectives;

(c) whether Social Exclusion will cover only one or two castes;

(d) the reasons for emphasizing Caste-specific funding by UGC; and

(e) the steps proposed to include minorities to caste-specific studies and funding and selection of educational institutions by UGC?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (e) Yes, Sir. According to the information furnished by the University Grants Commission (UGC), the UGC has approved the Tenth Plan Guidelines for establishment of Centres in Universities for studies of Social Exclusion and inclusive policy with the following objectives:

(i) Conceptualising discrimination, exclusion and inclusion based on caste/ethnicity and religion.

(ii) Developing understanding of the nature and dynamics of discrimination and exclusion.

(iii) Contextualising and problematising discrimination, exclusion and inclusion.

(iv) Developing an understanding of discrimination at an empirical level.

(v) Formulating policies for protecting the rights of these groups and eradicating the problem of exclusion and discrimination.

(vi) Studying civil society movements — and efforts to overcome social exclusion.

The Commission invites proposals from different Universities on the above issues and has also constituted an Expert Committee to scrutinize and examine the proposals for according approval.

Manipulation in EVMs during assembly election of West Bengal

2787. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the electronic voting machines (EVMs), including the hardware and software, provided for conducting general

elections for the West Bengal Assembly earlier this year were manufactured/supplied by organisation(s) under the administrative control of the Ministry of Defence;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of the organizations which created the operational programmes for the EVMs, so supplied;

(d) whether it is a fact that complaints of manipulation of the EVMs in West Bengal elections have been lodged by several parties/contestants;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the action taken, if any, thereon?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The Electronic Voting Machines used in West Bengal Assembly Election, 2006 are manufactured by a public sector undertaking *i.e.* Electronics Corporation of India Limited.

(c) Electronic Voting Machines are manufactured by two public sector manufacturers. One is M/s Electronics Corporation of India Limited, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh and other is M/s Bharat Electronics Limited, (A Government Enterprise, Ministry of Defence), Nagavara, Outer Ring Road, Bangalore, Karnataka.

(d) to (f) The Election Commission has intimated that only one complaint had been received from Shri Partha Chatterjee, Member of Legislative Assembly for 113 AC Behala (West) & General Secretary, WBTC wherein he had sought some technical verification regarding working of Electronic Voting Machines so that apprehension created in the minds of voters of West Bengal could be removed. However, no action had been taken as the apprehension raised was baseless and Electronic Voting Machines have been introduced in elections after it has been recommended by the National and State Political parties and technically evaluated by an Expert Committee constituted by the Government of India in 1989-90. The Expert Committee has given its unanimous report that these machines cannot be tampered. Also after 1998 the Electronic Voting Machines have been continuously put to use in many election till date and no instance of any kind of manipulation has come to notice setting aside all apprehensions.